2: Stefansson--81 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 482, 221

"When moving camp in summer the woman carries the stone cooking pot wrapped in bed skins, for the pot is very fragile. She also carries, if there be any, pups that are too small to walk and usually she carries the tent besides. If he has a kayak, the man carries this, his bow, arrows, all his tools, fragments of copper for making arrow-heads to replace those lost, and some other odds and ends. The one or two dogs carry backloads of meat and drag the sticks that go to make the tent frames. Thus loaded, the party travels at the rate of about two miles per hour but seldom moves over eight miles per day. The loads carried by the men and women are about of the same weight, and seldom exceed eighty pounds, for if there is more meat on hand than the dogs can carry they either delay till the surplus is eaten or dried down to suitable weight, or else a stone cache is made for the meat to serve as a relay on the return journey to the coast. Generally, therefore, a family returns to the coast by the way it came south in the spring, or else someone else takes up the caches if some special reason sends the owner by another route. Things en cache seem to belong strictly to the maker of a cache, though all eat equally of the meat when the cache is once broken. Very seldom does anyone, however, help himself from another man's meat pile, his wife is expected to serve out the food to all who want it."

2: Stefansson--257 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
482, 117

"July 28. Packing all wear head straps. One man carries kayak scuttle up, other scuttle to his back. Scuttle-up is on top a pack, other man carries no pack but the bow and quiver, which in both cases are on top the kayak."

The lamp-trimmer mentioned several times above was in most cases merely a pencil of wood varying in length from 6 to 18 inches, generally flattened at one end and smoothed. Any small stick, whether of wood, bone, or antler, sufficed in an emergency; I have even seen a man use his knife. The stone (soapstone or asbestos) pencils, often employed in West Greenland and in Hudson Bay,[1] seem to have been unknown to the Copper Eskimo. Unknown, too, were the drip-stands of Alaska, Greenland, and other places. The Coronation Gulf soapstone is not porous as the Greenland soapstone is said to be[2]; and though oil might frequently drip over the edges, it never seeped through the vessel itself.

Every household employed torches for lighting extra lamps, for searching the corners of the hut, and particularly for conveying fire from one snow-hut to another. Occasionally a woman used the lamp-stick or even raw lamp-wick, but she always kept for the purpose four or five bunches of matted moss roots that she had collected and dried in the late summer (Figure 47*b*). Such a torch, dipped in the melted blubber, would burn several minutes, though if carried outside in windy weather it had to be shielded inside a bag or bucket. It was a common sight after a day's march to see the women carrying torches from one hut to another in order to relight their lamps; the first lamp, of course, was lighted with pyrites.

In summer, when the lamp was discarded, the Eskimo carefully extinguished their open-air fires with flat stones in order to reduce the burning wood to charcoal, which readily took a spark on some future occasion and could be kindled into a flame with the breath. In blowing the fire they did not purse their lips as we do, but curled the tongue along the lower palate into a half-cylinder that directed the breath along a narrow path. When carrying glowing coals from one tent or cooking place to another the women usually wrapped them in bunches of dry heather or *Dryas integrifolia;* where no coals were available they used the heather or dryas alone.

POTS

The Back River Eskimo commonly made their cooking pot from five flat slabs of limestone cemented together.[3] Among the Copper Eskimo we saw none of this type, only pots carved from solid slabs of soapstone. Theoretically these pots should have received two forms, one adapted for cooking over the blubber lamp in winter and the other for use over an open fire during the summer months. The pot for use with the blubber lamp should have been a long, oblong vessel, rather narrow, because the flame of the lamp was a long, narrow line; it should have been comparatively deep to hold large pieces of seal and caribou meat; and it might have had considerable dimensions and weight, as it was always carried on the sled during the winter and spring months. The pot for use over an open fire in summer should have been less narrow, and altogether smaller and lighter, because at that season all the household furniture had to be carried on the back.

In actual fact both types existed among the Copper Eskimo, but the longer, narrower form adapted for use over the blubber lamp was far more generally used, as winter conditions prevailed during 8 months of the year. The pot was nearly always rectangular in outline, though one saw occasional specimens of trapezoid form. The corners were sharp, almost at right angles, the sides slightly convex in outline and sloping inward towards the bottom, making the vessel widest and longest at the top; the convexity in the sides was occasionally marked. In large pots there was a tendency for the depth to vary inversely with the breadth, so that the narrower vessels were likewise the deepest.

[1] Porsild, M.: Op. cit., p. 231. Thalbitzer, W.: The Ammassalik Eskimo; Meddelelser om Grønland, vol. XXXIX, p. 555 (Copenhagen, 1914).
[2] Birket-Smith, K.: Ethnography of Egedesminde District; Meddelelser om Grønland, vol. LXVI, p. 194 (Copenhagen, 1924).
[3] Chief Factor James Anderson's Back River Journal of 1838; Can. Field-Nat., vol. LV, 2, 1941, p. 38.

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Because many natives experienced difficulty in obtaining a piece of wood large enough to carve into a bowl, they often substituted a curved piece of bone or of musk-ox horn, lashed to a wooden handle. Specimens of these more or less makeshift scoops are illustrated in Figure 138, where *a* (IV.D.135) has a bowl of musk-ox horn, and *b* (IV.D.179) of bone. The handles of such scoops could be lengthened, if necessary, by lashing to the walking-stick or fish spear, for which purpose their owners often cut notches at the ends.

SEALING EQUIPMENT

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In the spring and autumn, when the seals were basking on the surface of the ice, Copper Eskimo hunters occasionally tried to crawl near enough to transfix them with their harpoons; but so slight were their chances of getting within range—unless perhaps in rough ice where there were sheltering hummocks—that most men never attempted the feat until they obtained rifles, which extended the effective distance for attack from 8 or 10 yards to 100 yards. Every man, on the other hand, and even some of the younger women, regularly tracked down the seals' breathing holes in the ice during the winter months and harpooned the animals when they rose to the surface. In midwinter, when the days were short, they started out for their hunting grounds half an hour before dawn, and did not return home until after dark. Their outfit was fairly standardized, though not always complete. Each man wore a long outer coat of thick caribou fur to protect his body from the cold. Sewn to the back of this coat was a bone button (*See* Figure 37) for the attachment of various tools, viz., a scoop to clear away the snow, bone skewers for closing the wounds in the seals, a toggle to drag them home, a spare harpoon head, and sometimes a foot-pad to protect the hunter's feet as he waited motionless, 1, 2, or even 3 hours, over the breathing hole. In his hand he carried his harpoon, the usual long, two-edged knife, and an "indicator" to warn him when a seal was rising to breathe; and from one wrist hung a special toggle that he attached to the trace of his dog. His method of hunting is described in "Life of the Copper Eskimos", Reports of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, vol. XII, pt. A, pages 112-114; here we need consider only the details of his tools and weapons.

Harpoons. The harpoon was roughly the height of a man, or from 5 feet 6 inches to 6 feet long; and it varied only in minor details (Figure 139). It contained essentially four parts—a shaft, usually of wood, but occasionally of two or more pieces of antler riveted and lashed together; a bone or antler (very rarely, copper) foreshaft that fitted into a hollow bone cap at the end of the shaft; a detachable head with a long hand line of plaited sinew;

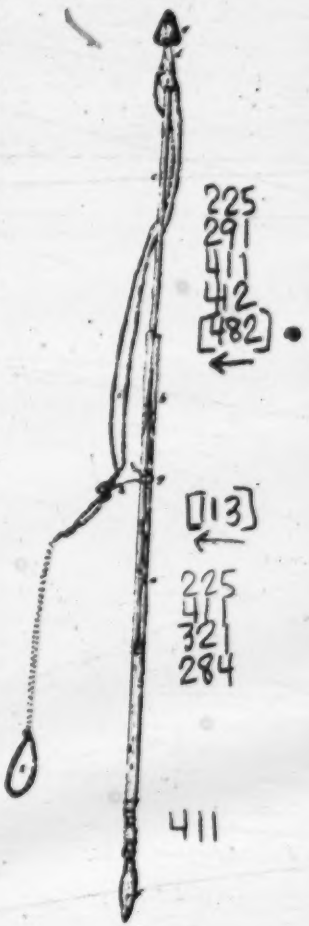

Figure 139. Sealing harpoon. *a*: wooden shaft; *b*: bone socket-piece riveted to the shaft with copper nails; *c*: antler foreshaft; *d*: antler head; *e*: copper blade; *f*: antler butt; *g*, *h*: sinew from hand line tucked under the thong that runs along the shaft, the thong itself being held down at this point with a copper staple; *i*: hand line of braided sinew; *k*: grip of hand line. IV.D.096. 1/10.

Scoops. The scoop (*ilaun*) (Figure 144) used for clearing the snow from the breathing hole of the seal had an average length of 1½ feet, and was made of musk-ox horn, mounted on a handle of horn, bone, antler, or wood. The two parts were generally spliced with a V-shaped notch, rarely by bevelling the ends and overlapping; pegs of copper or bone, and lashings of sealskin or sinew, held them firmly together. A small loop enabled the tool to be attached to the coat button; usually it passed through two holes in the handle and the ends were either tucked under the lashings around the splice or knotted. The handle tapered to a rounded point with which the hunter stabbed the eye of the seal when it was drawn to the surface.

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Figure 144. Scoop for sealing, of musk-ox horn. IV.D. 183. Approx. 1/4.

Indicators. The seal indicator and its use have been described in Reports of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, vol. XII, pt. A, page 113. Figure 145 illustrates the commoner type, the pencil of bone slightly more than a foot long, with the small bone disk at the bottom and the cord leading away to the needle that was pegged into the snow. Often, but not always, the top of the pencil, perforated for the cord, was made of a separate piece of musk-ox horn, neatly drilled, that fitted like a cap. During our residence in their territory a few natives experimented with indicators made, not from bone, but from the steel springs of some old rifle bolts; how effective they were I cannot say.

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For drawing up this indicator a few sealers used a fine hook of copper lashed with sinew to a short bone handle; a specimen is shown in Figure 146.

Figure 145. Seal indicator. IV.D.1518. 1/3.

Figure 146. Hook for withdrawing indicator from seal-hole. IV.D.484. Approx. 1/2.

Report of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, vol. XII, page 113, describes also a less common "indicator" made from a strip of caribou leg sinew that was slit to hold a wisp of bird's down. Unfortunately I failed to collect a specimen of this object.

Foot-pad. In midwinter many sealers carried a small square pad of caribou fur, or preferably of polar bear fur, to place under their feet when watching over the seal holes. Like the wound pins and the scoop, it hung from the button at the back of the coat, whereas the knife and the seal indicator were usually carried in the hand with the harpoon.

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small birds, principally ptarmigan; hence these toggles were called *aqargiqsiutit:* "ptarmigan appliances" (Figure 161).

A bone or musk-ox horn handle (*nerumiutaq*), fitted with a short strap of plaited sinew (Figure 162), was sometimes kept in the tool bag, but more often looped through some hole on the outside of the quiver or bow-case, or attached in some other way. Usually about 10 cm. long, of standardized shape, it was often grooved to fit the fingers in the same way as the blubber pounder and the whittling knife. This handle served on occasion to carry any small bundle, but was principally used for carrying the head of the caribou, or the bag containing its blood. From the latter use it acquired a second name, *auqtun* or "blood carrier".

Figure 160. Toggles sewn to bow-case. *a* for attaching the carrying strap, *b* for attaching the quiver. IV.D.1053, 91. 1/1.

The tool bag was often closed by lacing, for which purpose one end of a short cord of sinew was attached to the edge of the bag, and the other end to a small bone needle with which it could be threaded through the holes. When completely furnished, it contained the following articles.

Two marline-spikes for the bow lashings; two twisters for the bow lashings; one or more spare wedges to go under the lashings; feathers for the arrows, kept usually in a small bag of marmot or other skin; a small board for trimming the feathers; a grooving tool for attaching the feathers; a little caribou back sinew for lashing the feathers, splicing the arrows, sewing rents in clothing, etc.; spare parts of arrows for repairs; bone skewers for the carcasses of game; bone pins for the bag that contained the caribou blood; a wrist guard; a drinking tube; a needle-case and needle; a mattock for making a hunting pit (if too large for the tool bag this was carried in the quiver or even in the bow-case); an arrow straightener.

Very few tool bags, however, contained all these articles. The natives nearly always hunted together, and the deficiencies of one bag could be supplied from another. On the other hand, the tool bag often contained other articles, such as the whittling knife and the graver for cutting bone, which were more usually stored in a special tool bag at home, with the adze and the bow-drill. The bow adjuster, being large and cumbersome, was also left in camp.

Marline-spikes. Marline-spikes (Figure 163), which averaged from 6 inches to 10 inches long, were made of caribou or musk-ox bone. Some closely resembled marrow spatulæ and, at times, were actually used for extracting marrow, but their larger size, heavier construction, and the small hole below the handle instead of at the extreme end distinguished them from the ordinary spatulæ. This hole enabled them to be lashed in pairs, because two were required to unfasten and tighten the back lashings of the bow. One cord often fastened together the two marline-spikes and the two twisters, which also went in pairs. The handles of marline-spikes were frequently grooved for the fingers on one edge, and sometimes on both. Ornamentation, however, was rare, and when it did occur, consisted merely of a few incised lines or the ring-and-dot pattern.

Figure 161. Bone toggle attached to either bow-case or quiver for pinning through ptarmigan wings. IV.D.1829. 1/1.

Twisters. The twisters (Figure 164) were much shorter than the marline-spikes to which they were usually attached, although they were made of the same material, and also used in pairs. All had the same unvarying shape, a flattened

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 131]

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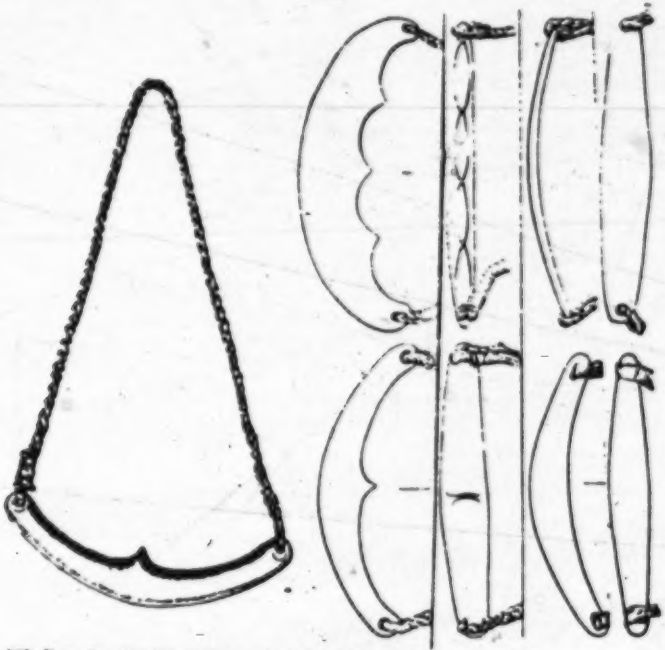

Figure 162. Bone handles for carrying the head of the caribou, or the bag containing its blood. IV.D.346, 198, 1438, 1500. 1/2.

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Figure 163. Bone marline-spikes for the bow lashings. IV.D.1308, 1329, 1510. 3/8.

Figure 164. Bone twister for the bow lashings. IV.D.1298. 1/2.

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Packs. Dog packs were flat sheets of sealskin, oval in outline, and perforated with holes along the two longer sides for cross lacings. Each end was filled like a bag, and the middle section left empty so that it would lie flat on the dog's back. The trace of the harness was drawn down over one side bag, under the animal's belly, and up over the other side bag; it was then pulled taut, and fastened to the end of the harness. At the end of summer dog packs were often cut up for boot soles, or used on the floors of the snow-huts.

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Figure 179. Man's harness for hauling sled. IV.D.717. Approx. 1/10.

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The average dog could carry only from 30 to 40 pounds, so that the Eskimo had to transport most of his belongings on his own back, inside his caribou-hide bedskin, by means of a shoulder strap and tump-line. The skin was laid flat on the ground and the articles piled in line on top of it, weight and bulk being distributed as evenly as possible between the two ends. The bundle was then rolled up and lashed with a long sealskin thong in two, or, in a large bundle, three places, the two ends and the middle. What remained of the thong became the shoulder strap; it passed from a loop held by a half hitch at one end of the bundle to a similar loop at the other. The tump-line, which was a band of sealskin or caribou skin with a thong tied to each end, fastened to the thong lashing of the bundle at any convenient points, but usually just behind the end loops.[1]

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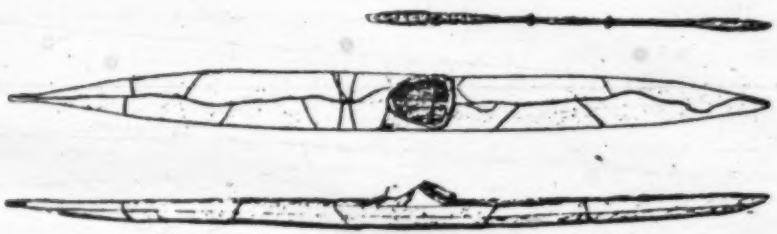

Figure 180. Kayak and paddle. IV.D.1057. Approx. 1/24.

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Kayaks. The Copper Eskimo had never seen a umiak, and they used their kayaks (Figure 180) not for hunting seals, but only for ferrying across bays and rivers and for spearing caribou that had been driven into the water. Though a hunter generally made or bought a kayak at some time or other in his career,

[1] For illustration see Reports of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, vol. XII, pt. A., Pl. V, p. 288.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
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arrows. We had supplies in abundance to cover most of their needs; but the other members of our party spoke no Eskimo, and had gladly delegated all the trading to me after the first day's experience. Anderson, who joined us at Christmas, approved the arrangement, which held throughout the duration of the expedition. It placed a power in my hands that increased my security among the natives and rescued me from more than one awkward predicament. On this occasion the mere cessation of trade for a few days quelled their aggressiveness and checked any further attempt at open robbery.

As soon as the majority of the women had finished their sewing, the Eskimos began to migrate along the coast to a low promontory from which they could cross in one day to the Liston and Sutton Islands. They moved on different mornings, and at different hours of the morning, some early and some late. Their only clocks were the sun by day and the moon and stars by night; but the sun had now disappeared for several weeks, the moon set early, and the stars do not shine through walls of snow. So my host, who wished to set out at daybreak, roused his household nearly three hours too soon; and his grievous error made us shiver in idleness on the sleeping-platform until it grew light enough to load up the sleds.

The villagers were too practical to carry all the furniture out through the long passageways when they

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abandoned their huts. Those who had windows of ice in their houses removed them and passed their goods through the gap; and those who had no windows cut large holes in the walls, which they could fill up with a snow-block or two if they wanted to reoccupy the huts. But the Eskimos seldom returned to the same habitations; old houses remained deserted until the spring, when they melted slowly away under the warm rays of the sun. Passing travellers might occupy them for a night, but even they generally preferred to build new houses, which were warmer and more comfortable. Hence one could readily discover all the winter movements of these Eskimos by tracking down the villages they had successively deserted between October and May.

Our migration along the coast resulted in a new settlement of snow-huts a few yards out from the beach. It was too early in the winter to camp far from shore, for a violent gale might break the level ice-field into drifting floes. Even the light gale that sprang up four nights later produced a large tide-crack under two houses that lay more to seaward than the rest. Misfortune ruled that I should be sleeping in one of them. The snow-blocks cracked one after another, with loud reports like pistol-shots, and the walls split from ceiling to floor. Then the water poured up through the tide-crack and flooded the hut nearly to the level of the sleeping-platform. My hostess, stepping down to

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Photo by K. G. Chipman.

It was a picturesque sight, this train of people and dogs stumbling over hill and lake.

[p. 128-B]

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[F 128-H]

Weighted down with heavy packs, stumbling over a trackless land to a new fishing-lake in the hope of breaking their fast before another sleep.

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westward where I generally made my excursions, trapped and destroyed the solitary hunter. In this very district, many years before, it had spirited away her first husband, who had vanished without leaving a trace. So when I, too, vanished for sixteen hours one day she became greatly alarmed, and entreated Ikpuck to lead a searching party. Willy-nilly, I had to join the fishermen and let my dogs go hungry.

The fish soon commenced to bite less freely in the surrounding lakes, and some of the men wandered farther afield. Ikpuck then shot a caribou eight miles away near the shore of Lake Ever-Frozen. Instead of packing it home, he buried it in the snow and advised moving our camp to its vicinity. Every one welcomed his suggestion and prepared back-packs for the dogs, since the melting of the snow on the ridges rendered our sleds useless until autumn came round again. We concealed in stone cairns the dried fish we had accumulated, raised the empty sleds on stone pillars, and piled on top of them all the stone lamps and other articles too heavy or too bulky to carry around with us during the summer; then, packing on our backs the remainder of the equipment, we abandoned the Lake of Dancing and marched away to our new home.

It was a picturesque sight, this train of people and dogs staggering over hill and lake under burdens almost equal in size and weight to themselves. The men carried the tents and weapons, the women the

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
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sleeping-gear, spare clothing, and cooking utensils, and the little children their own bedding and whatever else their strength permitted. With the packs lying horizontally across their backs they resembled from a distance dark crosses that crept over the snow, now strung out in irregular formation, now filing one behind another in single line, now clustering together with little movement as the train halted to rest. The dogs trailed behind the women and children, their packs, shaped like saddle-bags, beating against their ribs or grooving continuous furrows in the snow; but they, too, inherited the pioneering blood and adventurous spirit of their masters, and, in spite of their heavy burdens, curled their tails jauntily over their backs and cocked their ears at the alert.

Slowly we filed across Lake Ever-Frozen and deposited our loads on the shore of a deep inlet at its northern end. In a broad pool created by a stream that foamed down the hill-side a red-throated loon gaily dived and rose to the surface again. Ikpuck seized his fish-trident and raced over the ice to spear it; but just as he reached the margin of the pool the ice gave way, and plunged him in water to his waist. The loon flew up, and the mortified hunter returned to the bank to change his clothing. He had stripped off everything but his jacket—like a swallow-tail coat, it reached to his waist in front and hung down in a long tail behind—when a second loon settled in the same

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of which we shot. The heads and limbs we buried in the snow to collect the following day; The Runner took one of the carcasses on his back, I took the other, and Leaf carried the two hares. After we had proceeded thus for about a mile The Runner changed burdens with his wife, who accepted without a murmur. I promptly changed with him, and a few minutes after with Leaf again, giving her back the hares. But packing was still a new experience to me, and though I reached the camp without mishap, I deeply rued my gallantry the next morning when a thousand pains shot through my neck every time I turned my head.

A fortnight's fishing exhausted the bay and compelled us to make another move. It mattered little which way we turned, for every ridge bounded a lake that contained both trout and salmon. But since the total catch would be greater if we scattered our forces and settled on different lakes the families separated. The Listener went south, The Chatterbox north, Parted-Hair north-east, and Ikpuck and The Runner east.

This dispersal of the individual families completed one half of the strange cycle through which the Eskimos passed year after year. They reacted to the seasons, to their constantly changing environment, more than most of the inhabitants of our globe. The problem of obtaining life's basic needs, food, clothing, and shelter, left little time for other thoughts; and the seals and caribou that furnished them with food, fur-

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women and children gathered large quantities of these seeds, stuffing them into small bags of the strangest varieties and materials. Some were worn-out stockings of squirrel or caribou fur; two were made from the membranes that had lined the hearts of our polar bears; but the most curious of all were bottle-shaped pouches sewn from the webbed feet of red-throated loons. Whatever their shape, all alike found their way into the dog-packs, where they added one more item to our varied impedimenta.

Our loads had increased considerably since those early days in August when, leaving the hills, we had commenced this ceaseless quest of caribou. Icehouse, it is true, had no longer two small puppies tearing at the back of her hair while ostensibly nestling in the hood of her jacket; they were sturdy urchins now, able to keep pace with the other dogs and to steal the meat from our packs. But in addition to her usual burden she carried fifteen pounds of tallow, her share of the caribou back fat that the women had boiled down for ease of transport. Each man had several green caribou hides rolled round his pack, and Ikpuck and The Runner bore the two bear skins, which alone weighed upward of fifty pounds. My own pack was unchanged save for two extra caribou hides, and an increase in the thickness of my herbarium from two inches to six.

Late one afternoon, as we skirted the edge of a lake, we came to an old camping-site where a woman's knife,